



Department
of Health &
Social Care

From Andrew Gwynne MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
for Public Health and Prevention

39 Victoria Street
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Your Ref: TF167501

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Tim Farron MP

By email to: tim@timfarron.co.uk

16 January 2025

Dear Tim,

Thank you for your correspondence of 29 November to the Secretary of State on behalf of your constituent Ms Anne McConway about long COVID. I apologise for the delay in replying.

I appreciate Ms McConway's concerns. The Government understands the debilitating effect that long COVID can have on adults and children and is committed to improving the lives of people living with the condition.

As someone who has been suffering with long COVID, I understand just how debilitating it can be. Since my appointment in July, I have held a number of meetings to look much more closely at long COVID and myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome and how we can best support people with these conditions.

As of 1 April 2024, there are over 90 adult post-COVID services across England, along with an additional ten children's and young people's hubs. These services assess people with long COVID and direct them to care pathways that provide appropriate support and treatment. GPs will assess patients who have COVID-19 symptoms lasting longer than four weeks and refer them to a long-COVID service where appropriate.

I also appreciate Ms McConway's concerns about airborne transmission of COVID-19. Although not the primary mode of transmission, smaller particles can remain airborne for extended periods and travel further distances. Transmission may occur under certain conditions, such as in enclosed and poorly ventilated spaces and during specific aerosol-generating medical procedures. This transmission mode has been implicated in some outbreak scenarios, including choir practices and indoor gatherings.

Guidance has been published on transmission routes, which can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/sars-cov-2-transmission-routes-and-environments-22-october-2020.

In her testimony to the COVID-19 Inquiry, Dr Lisa Ritchie, NHS England's National Infection Prevention and Control Lead, reaffirmed that COVID-19 is not predominantly transmitted through the airborne route. This position is supported by the Government and aligns with the scientific evidence provided by the World Health Organization (WHO). Until scientific evidence suggests that the virus is predominantly spread through the airborne route, this stance will remain unchanged.

We would urge caution against drawing conclusions from social media discussions about transmission routes, and to instead rely on accepted global scientific evidence from the WHO, the UK Health Security Agency and other authoritative sources.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,